



The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in the Pacific: **Rising to the challenge**



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



ICRC



Cover Image: Dennis Toata, a Solomon Islands Red Cross volunteer, on the way to deliver mosquito nets to Ferafalu village on Manaoba island off the north tip of Malaita. Nets are being delivered to the village by Red Cross volunteers in preparation for the malaria season.

Source : Rob Few/ International Federation

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The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement consists of several components: the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Each component is guided by the same seven Fundamental Principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality.

The Movement's mission is to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, to protect life and health, to ensure respect for human dignity (in particular in times of armed conflict and other emergencies), to work for the prevention of disease and the promotion of health and social welfare, to encourage voluntary service and a constant readiness to help and, finally, to foster a universal sense of solidarity towards all those in need of the Movement's protection and assistance.

International Committee of the Red Cross

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization. Its humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC directs and coordinates the international relief activities conducted by the Movement in situations of conflict. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) works to inspire, facilitate and promote all humanitarian activities carried out by member National Societies to improve the situation of the most vulnerable people. Founded in 1919, the International Federation directs and coordinates international assistance provided by the Movement to victims of disasters, to refugees, and in health emergencies. It acts as the official representative of member National Societies in the international field. It promotes cooperation between National Societies and works to strengthen their capacity to carry out effective disaster preparedness, health and social programmes.

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies embody the work and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 186 countries. National Societies act as auxiliaries to the public authorities of their own countries in the humanitarian field and provide a range of services including disaster relief, health and social programmes. During armed conflict, National Societies assist the affected civilian population and support the army medical services where appropriate. In order to become part of the Movement, all National Societies must meet a set of conditions for recognition.



The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Proclaimed in Vienna in 1965, the seven Fundamental Principles bond together the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement:

Humanity

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality

In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

Governing Bodies

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is governed by the **International Conference**, the **Council of Delegates**, and **Standing Commission**.

One of the most important humanitarian forums in the world, the **International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent** brings together the States party to the Geneva Conventions and the various components of the Movement. It is the Movement's supreme deliberative body, adopting measures to deal with issues of shared humanitarian concern. The International Conference fosters unity within the Movement and helps it carry out its mission in full accordance with its Fundamental Principles. The conference contributes to respect for and development of international humanitarian law and other treaties of particular interest to the Movement. Only the International Conference is able to amend the Movement's statutes and the conference's rules of procedure. It meets on a four-yearly basis.

The **Council of Delegates** gives an opinion and where necessary takes decisions on policy and subjects of common interest to all components of the Movement. The members of the Council of Delegates are those delegated by the National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation to represent them. It meets just prior to the opening of each International Conference and, in principle, on the occasion of each session of the International Federation's General Assembly (which is held every two years). National Societies in the process of recognition may attend its meetings as observers. The International Conference and the Council of Delegates endeavour to adopt all resolutions by consensus.

The main tasks of the **Standing Commission** are to prepare the International Conference and the Council of Delegates, and deal with matters of concern to the Movement as a whole. The Standing Commission comprises five members from National Societies, two representatives of the ICRC and two representatives of the International Federation.



Natutu Village in Fiji is surrounded by a river and the open sea, placing its community members at great risk for disasters. The Fiji Red Cross Society has established a village committee to oversee disaster preparedness and community-based training programmes. Together, Red Cross volunteers maintain disaster supplies, teach first aid and inform villagers on how to stay safe during emergencies.

Source: Rob Few/ International Federation



PRINCIPLES of

- ① HUMANITY.
(ROKOVI NI BULA)
- ② IMPARTIALITY.
(SEGA NA VEIVA)
- ③ NEUTRALITY.
(VEIT)

The Humanitarian Challenge

The countries of the Pacific region are richly diverse, in terms of culture, development, infrastructure, location, social dynamics and resources. From vast Australia to recently independent Palau and the many islands of French Polynesia, each nation faces its own challenges. Political and economic security, access to services, geographical remoteness, natural resource management, population growth and environmental degradation are all factors that influence development outcomes for communities in the Pacific region.

The Pacific islands comprise some 500 inhabited islands spread over 30 million square kilometres. Pacific island countries are among the most heavily aid-assisted in the world. Aggregated into three major indigenous groupings: Polynesian, Micronesian and Melanesian, Pacific island communities speak over 1,000 language groups (including 800 in Papua New Guinea).

Australia, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand are the most populated nations in the region, with 22.5 million, 6.6 million and 4.3 million residents respectively. The remainder of Pacific island countries comprise just over two million inhabitants, and range in size from less than 2,000 in Niue to 844,000 in Fiji. Kiribati, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are among the least developed countries in the world.

Communities in the Pacific region face a number of new challenges during an era of unprecedented social change. Major towns are growing rapidly as people leave rural areas in search of opportunities. There is an increase in informal settlements, where basic services such as water and sanitation are poor, and tension can arise over land shortages and tenure. Of those who remain in rural areas, many are hard to reach; essential services and basic education are often lacking.

In parts of the region, gains made in health during the 1990s – particularly in child and maternal health – have decreased. In the Pacific region, at least five women die every day in pregnancy or childbirth. Public health systems continue to respond to communicable diseases such as malaria, leprosy, cholera, measles and tuberculosis. At least 80,000 adults have HIV or AIDS, with an estimated 76,000 of those infected living in Papua New Guinea. Non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension and diabetes are highly prevalent, and are the most common causes of death. The increase in such morbidity is attributed to dietary changes, alcohol, tobacco, and a lack of exercise.

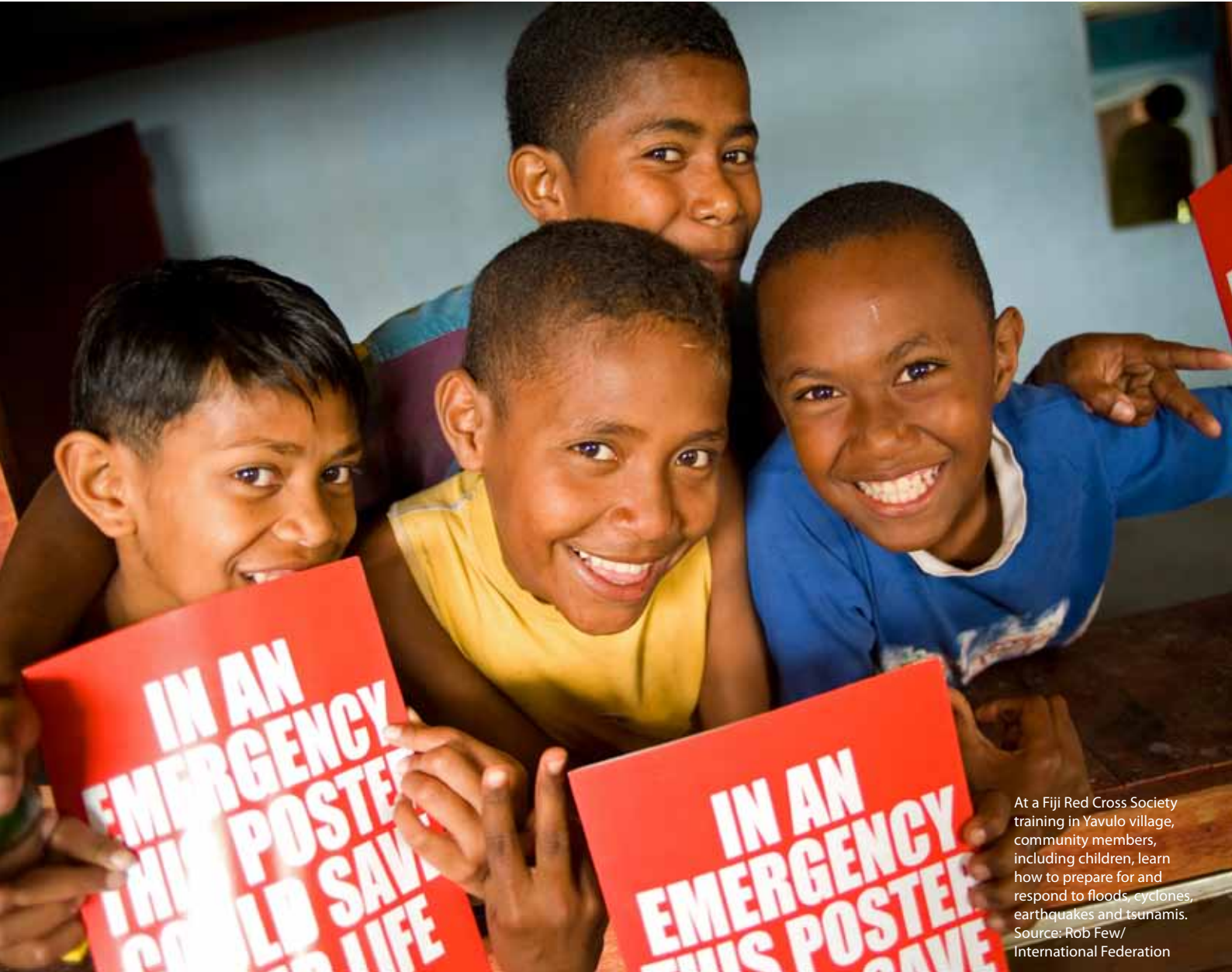
The quest for economic sustainability

It is estimated that 50 per cent of people in the region cannot produce enough food nor have the money to meet their basic needs. Many Pacific island countries are economically vulnerable due to small domestic markets, distance from centres of economic activity, the high cost of transportation and limited trading and negotiation power.

The recent financial crisis demonstrated the economic vulnerability of Pacific island countries. Events in 2008 increased the cost of food and essential services and significantly reduced income from tourism and remittances. As a result, less money is available for nutrition, health and education. The greatest impact is felt by the most vulnerable in each community such as the poor, elderly, disabled, and female-headed households. Poverty forces some women and children into transactional sex, with the associated risks of sexually transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancy and violence.

Environmental impact

Due to their location in the Pacific Ocean, along the Pacific Ring of Fire, most countries in the region are vulnerable to a range of natural hazards. These include floods, cyclones, earthquakes, drought, bushfires and volcanic activity. Variations in weather and seasons have a significant



At a Fiji Red Cross Society training in Yavulo village, community members, including children, learn how to prepare for and respond to floods, cyclones, earthquakes and tsunamis. Source: Rob Few/International Federation

impact upon the large number of communities who depend upon subsistence farming, fishing and tourism. Women have been found to be particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. They are 14 times more likely than men to die during natural disasters. Research has shown that when families are displaced by disasters, women face increased physical violence. Many communities in the region experience the consequences of climate change, environmental degradation, large-scale natural resource extraction, diminishing fish stock, fresh water shortages and inadequate waste disposal systems.

Climate change is a clear threat to development gains in the Pacific. It is of particular concern to low-lying atoll countries such as Tuvalu and Kiribati where rising sea levels could make these countries uninhabitable. Climate change is likely to increase the frequency and intensity of flooding, drought and cyclones. Other affects include accelerated coastal erosion and coral reef bleaching. Saline intrusion from rising sea levels kills crops, affects soil quality and reduces the availability of potable water. It is now understood that climate change is contributing to increases in malaria, dengue fever, diarrheal diseases and malnutrition – illness that affect young children the most.

Security and vulnerability

A number of communities in the region have experienced conflict and unrest. Major drivers include economic and social pressure, ethnic tensions, internal migration, uneven development and distribution of resources, land tenure, self-determination, geopolitical performances, government performance and accountability.

In many communities, traditional social structures and values have been disrupted. Unemployment, underemployment and limited opportunities for young people can lead to frustration, crime and conflict. In some urban areas, youth and gangs seeking money for food, alcohol or drugs leads to petty theft and more serious crimes by armed gangs. Physical, psychological and economic violence against women and girls by intimate partners is common. Sexual violence against women and girls – by intimate partners or others – is particularly prevalent in Melanesia.

Governance

Many Pacific island nations are establishing themselves during an era of rapid change and enormous social, economic and political pressure. A number of countries operate under two systems of governance, the customary structures that have developed over thousands of years, and more recently established formal institutions of the nation-state.

In today's context, traditional systems of chiefly leadership do not always ensure the equal distribution of goods; communities increasingly look to national governments for basic education, health, welfare services and income generation opportunities. Women's involvement in decision-making varies throughout the region. Gender roles are often clearly defined, with women traditionally performing domestic roles, which can limit their public participation in decisions about how resources are distributed.

Resilience

In the face of complex challenges, Pacific island communities have demonstrated their strength and resilience. Regional cooperation and integration has increased, with the development of bodies such as the Pacific Islands Forum, the Secretariat of the South Pacific Community, the University of the South Pacific and the Pacific Regional Environmental Program. These groupings are working together to formulate agreements such as the Pacific Forum's Pacific Plan and the Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015. The Biketawa Declaration of 2000 created a framework for coordinated response during regional crises, and facilitated the participation of Australian and New Zealand military forces in regional security and peacekeeping operations in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Nauru and Tonga.

Religious institutions, customary systems, civil society, traditional leadership, youth, women's groups, non-government organizations and community radio play an important role, particularly in the areas of health, education and human security. Women have a strong role as peacemakers, and played a leading role in brokering peace in the Papua New Guinea Highlands and the Solomon Islands tensions. Many communities are rich in traditional knowledge and practices. A renewed focus on community-based solutions and traditional knowledge – such as food preservation, housing construction, traditional systems of barter and exchange and the management of natural resources – is helping to enhance disaster management and preparedness across the region.



Rising to the Challenge

In the Pacific, National Societies, the ICRC and the International Federation work together in solidarity to improve the lives of the most vulnerable. The Movement's diverse components perform complimentary roles, with local foundations as well as an international network and global perspective. Well-recognized for their important work, Pacific National Societies are represented in communities through extensive branch networks, and have achieved recognition and protection of the Red Cross emblem. In order to better assist the vulnerable people who are at the centre of its work, the Movement coordinates its activities with other players on a regional and country level – without compromising its Fundamental Principles.



Facts and figures

80 delegations worldwide
13,000 staff worldwide
CHF 3.6 million[°] budget for
the Pacific region
21 staff in the Pacific region

[°] all budget figures in this document are
quoted in Swiss francs (CHF)

Since 2001, ICRC operations in the Pacific have been carried out by the Suva regional delegation. With its offices in Australia and in Papua New Guinea, it covers all states, autonomous territories and colonies of the Pacific. The ICRC is pursuing its efforts to promote international humanitarian law (IHL) and humanitarian principles throughout the Pacific region. Governments are encouraged to accede to IHL instruments not yet ratified, such as the Rome Statute, the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and are assisted in incorporating IHL provisions into domestic legislation. The ICRC is further promoting the adoption of legislation on the emblem.

Increasing knowledge of IHL and international human rights law among members of the armed and security forces in countries where there is a potential for violence is priority for the ICRC. The ICRC works to ensure that troops being deployed abroad are aware of the organization's specific mandate in conflict situations. To these ends, the ICRC gives ad hoc presentations, participates in pre-deployment briefings, organizes regional events and sponsors officers selected for overseas training.

Through regular contact, briefings and the circulation of written materials, the ICRC promotes wider coverage of humanitarian issues by the region's media, in partnership with the relevant National Society. It also raises awareness of its mandate and activities among human rights non-governmental organizations, think tanks and community leaders. Academic institutions are given support to increase knowledge of IHL among students and are encouraged to incorporate IHL into law and journalism curricula.

Together with the International Federation, the ICRC strengthens the efforts of Pacific National Societies to become unique and distinct institutions and to constitute relevant humanitarian actors in their respective countries. It provides training, expertise and material support to help them respond more effectively to armed conflict, other situations of violence and emergencies. Emphasis is placed on the Safer Access approach, first aid, tracing and dissemination of IHL and the Fundamental Principles.

The ICRC visits persons deprived of their liberty, notably those arrested in connection with past unrest in Fiji and the Solomon Islands to ensure that their treatment and conditions of detention comply with internationally recognized standards and, if necessary, make representations to the relevant authorities. These visits are undertaken on a strictly confidential basis and with the full agreement of the detaining authorities.



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Facts and figures

186 Red Cross and Red
Crescent National Societies
60 delegations worldwide
5 zone offices
CHF 2.8 million annual budget
for the Pacific region plus
additional mobilisation of
funds when disasters strike
19 staff in the Pacific region

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (International Federation) is the world's largest humanitarian organization. The 186 Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies together form the International Federation. With a secretariat in Geneva and more than 60 delegations worldwide, the International Federation works across five operational zones. The Pacific regional office is based in Suva, Fiji, and is part of the Asia Pacific zone. The International Federation provides assistance to disaster victims in the Pacific through the agency of the Pacific National Societies in a spirit of cooperation with the public authorities.

The Suva regional office facilitates cooperation between National Societies in 15 Pacific island countries and territories. The office also builds local capacities by investing in people and institutions; organisational development is a crucial factor in developing strong Red Cross Societies that can deliver on their humanitarian mission.

The International Federation represents the shared beliefs and joint efforts of National Societies, knowing that the chances of improving the lives of vulnerable people are increasingly influenced by the globalizing forces of an interconnected and interdependent world. The mission of the International Federation is to “inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world”

Guided by the ten-year Strategy 2020, the International Federation supports Pacific island National Societies in three strategic areas:



1. **Saving lives, protecting livelihoods and strengthening recovery from disasters and crises.** This is done through disaster preparedness, response and recovery. Pacific island National Societies are assisted to establish disaster management systems, networks of trained volunteers, adequate contingency stocks, logistics and communication systems. The International Federation advocates and builds government capacity for effective international disaster response laws, thus reducing barriers to urgently needed relief and reducing the costs and bureaucratic challenges of providing effective assistance.



2. **Enabling safe and healthy living.** The International Federation supports health and care activities that reduce the number of deaths, illness and impact from diseases and disasters. The International Federation helps National Societies to strengthen advocacy and programme delivery in community-based health and first aid, HIV and AIDS education, voluntary non-remunerated blood donation programs, public health in emergencies, water and sanitation, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.



3. **Promoting social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.** The International Federation promotes humanitarian values and gender equality. It encourages National Societies to reflect the diversity of their populations, ensure effective participation by vulnerable groups, and promote respect for difference. Advocating the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, disseminating international humanitarian law and building capabilities in humanitarian diplomacy are all essential steps taken in the Pacific region toward these aims.

The International Federation strives, through voluntary action, for a Pacific region made up of empowered communities, better able to address human suffering and crises with hope and dignity.

Pacific island National Societies

Pacific island National Societies reflect the diversity of communities in the region. Among the fifteen National Societies operating in their national territories, some are very small – such as the Kiribati Red Cross Society, and the Tuvalu Red Cross Society, which is in formation. Others are well-established organizations such as those in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Branches and chapters of the American and French Red Cross are also present in the region.

Pacific island National Societies are community-based organizations that deliver a range of programs adapted to each country's context, in the areas of disaster management, disaster risk reduction, health and social welfare. Through branch and national leadership structures, Red Cross National Societies contribute to sustainable development by reducing vulnerability and bolstering community resilience. With Red Cross support, communities are better able to adapt and cope with threats and crises, thus preserving their development gains.



The Vanuatu Red Cross Society's staff and volunteers participating in a water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) training programme.
Source: Sarah Davies/ Australian Red Cross



Vanuatu Red Cross Society

The Vanuatu Red Cross Society has a well-established disaster management programme, in a country that is vulnerable to tropical cyclones, volcanism, earthquakes and tsunamis. The Vanuatu Red Cross Society has 448 volunteers, trained in community-based disaster preparedness, emergency response team operations, disaster assessment, emergency communication, comprehensive first aid and community-based health and first aid approaches.

Vanuatu is a Y-shaped archipelago of volcanic origin, situated at the meeting point of tectonic plates. The country is home to Yasur, one of the world's most active volcanoes. The Vanuatu Red Cross Society is concerned about the negative humanitarian effects that could result from global trends such as climate change, urbanization and economic downturn. Such challenges are further aggravated by demographic changes generated by the collision of modern and traditional ways of life and the impact of natural disasters. The National Society is witnessing a growing potential for tension and violence in Vanuatu, and aims to position itself for rapid response.

The Vanuatu Red Cross Society continues to support vulnerable members of the community. In 2010, the National Society initiated a water, sanitation and hygiene programme on the island of Ambrym. This programme will provide safe drinking water to communities whose rainwater is contaminated by the volcanic plume and emission of sulphur dioxide.

In a traditional ceremony in 2009, the head of the Vanuatu Council of Chiefs officially granted the National Society the right to use the Namele palm leaf symbol (the customary protective symbol) alongside the Red Cross emblem. This is an important step in the development of connections between traditional cultures of the Pacific and the modern codification of international humanitarian law.

Originally a branch of the British Red Cross, the Vanuatu Red Cross Society was formed in 1982 after the country's independence. In January 2010, the National Society received full recognition from the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu as a voluntary relief society, auxiliary to the public authorities, and the only National Red Cross Society that can carry out its activities in Vanuatu. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the Republic of Vanuatu and the Vanuatu Red Cross Society.



A Vanuatu Red Cross Society staff member inspecting stock of relief items prepositioned as part of the National Society's disaster preparedness measure. Source: Jessica Leitch/ Australian Red Cross

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Red Cross
European Union
French Red Cross
Government of the Republic of Vanuatu
ICRC
International Federation

facts and figures

657 members and volunteers²⁰¹⁰
18 staff²⁰¹⁰

Population: 234,000²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita:
Int \$4,807²⁰¹⁰
Human development index
ranking: not available²⁰¹⁰

**gross domestic product (PPP) per capita refers to the value of goods and services produced expressed in purchasing power parity, as estimated by the International Monetary Fund. This measure, expressed in international dollars, takes each country's cost of living and inflation rate into account.*



The Tuvalu Red Cross Society's oldest volunteer, Cindarella Tuvlamati, has been assisting people living with disabilities and raising funds for underprivileged children since she started volunteering in the 1980s.

Source: Rob Few/ International Federation



Tuvalu Red Cross Society

TUVALU RED CROSS SOCIETY

The Tuvalu Red Cross Society has a core team of three staff. The Tuvalu Red Cross Society has an active network of 600 members and volunteers across its headquarters and eight branches.

Tuvalu is one of the smallest countries in the world, consisting of three reef islands and six atolls totalling 26 square kilometres of land. The highest land elevation in Tuvalu is 4.5 metres, resulting in extreme vulnerability to climate change and the three-metre-high 'King Tides' that inundate Tuvalu each year. Although severe tropical storms are usually rare, three cyclones struck the country in 1997 .

The Tuvalu Red Cross Society maintains two disaster relief containers, including tarpaulins, blankets, buckets, water containers and kitchen sets, and has established an emergency shelter in Vaitupu. The National Society is actively involved in the redevelopment of Tuvalu's national disaster management plan. The Tuvalu Red Cross Society has 18 emergency response volunteers, and branches are trained in satellite communications. Each month a communications check is conducted, to ensure that skills are refreshed and that equipment is working properly.

The Tuvalu Red Cross Society conducts a broad range of activities including HIV and AIDS awareness for seafarers and their partners, community-based health and first aid, first-aid training in schools, blood donor recruitment, anti-tobacco campaigning, home visits to the elderly and disabled, and visits to hospitals and prisons. Its youth drama team focuses on climate change issues, and received commendation for its performance at the 2010 King Tides Festival. In 2009 Red Cross youth volunteers joined the Tuvalu National Youth Council.

The Tuvalu Red Cross Society is considered a National Society in formation, as it continues the process for recognition by the Movement. The Tuvalu Red Cross Society was established as a branch of the British Red Cross in 1969. When the country gained independence in 1978, the process of forming Tuvalu Red Cross Society began and by 1981 a new constitution was adopted. The government of Tuvalu is a signatory to the Geneva Conventions and supports the National Society with an annual grant of 9,300 Swiss francs. The Tuvalu Red Cross Society is a member of the national disaster committee, and the national disaster management working group.

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
 Australian Red Cross
 Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan)
 Empress Shōken Fund
 Government of Tuvalu
 ICRC
 International Federation
 Japanese Red Cross Society
 Local NGOs and faith-based organizations
 New Zealand Red Cross
 Secretariat of the Pacific Community
 Tuvalu Climate Action Network (TuCAN)
 Tuvalu Meteorological Office
 Tuvalu Ministry of Health
 Tuvalu National AIDS Committee
 UNICEF
 World Health Organization

facts and figures

600 members and volunteers ²⁰¹⁰
 3 staff ²⁰¹⁰

Population: 10,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
 Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: Int \$1,600 ²⁰⁰²



The Tonga Red Cross Society built transitional shelters on Niuatoputapu island to assist the people affected by the 2009 tsunami. Source: International Federation



TONGA RED CROSS SOCIETY

Tonga Red Cross Society

The Tonga Red Cross Society has a strong history of disaster management and youth involvement. Youth make up 55 per cent of the Tonga Red Cross Society's 340 volunteers. The main activities of young volunteers include health awareness campaigns, peer education, fund-raising, and first aid during sporting events and emergencies.

The Kingdom of Tonga is the last remaining constitutional monarchy in the Pacific. The kingdom comprises 170 islands – 36 of which are inhabited – which form an archipelago that stretches 500 kilometres. Approximately 70 per cent of the population depend upon subsistence farming. Tonga is prone to cyclones, earthquakes, and volcanic activity. Political violence in November 2006 resulted in an extended state of emergency.

Tonga Red Cross Society programmes include disaster management, first aid, blood donor recruitment, social welfare, restoring family links, the dissemination of international humanitarian law and humanitarian values, and home care, recreation and education for people with disabilities. Whilst most activities are confined to the main island of Tongatapu, the National Society intends to extend its reach via branches in Vava'u, Ha'apai, Eua, Niua Fo'ou and Niuatoputapu.

The Tonga Red Cross Society periodically revises its emergency response plan as needed. It has emergency response teams in its branches and pre-positioned disaster relief containers in Nuku'alofa, Vava'u, Niuatoputapu and Ha'apai, and is establishing containers on the islands of Eua and Niua Fo'ou. Disaster management personnel responded to the sinking of MV Ashika and Niuatoputapu tsunami in 2009, and Tropical Cyclone Rene in 2010.

The Tonga Red Cross Society was founded as a branch of the British Red Cross. A 1972 act of parliament passed the new constitution and gave official recognition to the Tonga Red Cross Society. The President of Tonga Red Cross Society is Her Majesty Queen Halaevalu Mata'aho 'Ahome'e (the Queen mother). The government of Tonga has an official national disaster plan that recognizes the Tonga Red Cross Society as a provider of relief and assistance during emergency and disaster recovery.

key partnerships

- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
- Australian Red Cross
- French Red Cross
- ICRC
- International Federation
- Japanese Red Cross Society
- Local businesses
- Local media
- National Disaster Management Committee
- New Zealand Red Cross
- Tonga Ministry of Health

facts and figures

450 members and volunteers ²⁰⁰⁹
17 staff ²⁰⁰⁹

Population: 104,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: Int \$7,134 ²⁰¹⁰
Human development index ranking: 85 ²⁰¹⁰



Jemalyn Rex, aged 4, helping to put up the mosquito net that was delivered to his home by the Solomon Islands Red Cross' volunteers.
Photo: Rob Few/ International Federation



Solomon Islands Red Cross

With a large volunteer base in four branches, the Solomon Islands Red Cross has a well-established disaster management programme and regularly responds to the frequent disasters that affect communities. The Solomon Islands Red Cross enjoys a solid reputation for well-trained staff and volunteers, and its rapid response capacity.

The Solomon Islands is a country of almost 1,000 islands spanning 1,500 kilometres from east to west, and situated between two tectonic plates. The predominately Melanesian population of over half a million people speak 70 languages. The country is susceptible to tropical cyclones, which are occasionally destructive. The region is geologically active with frequent earthquakes, tremors, volcanic activity and tsunamis.

The Solomon Islands Red Cross earned great respect for its neutrality and independence during the country's ethnic tensions between 1999 and 2003. In the 1990s, the National Society assisted refugees from the Bougainville Crisis in neighbouring Papua New Guinea. In 2006, the Solomon Islands Red Cross once again demonstrated its ability to work in situations of violence, evacuating and supporting people affected by the Chinatown riots.

Today, the Solomon Islands Red Cross works on a wide range of programmes. These include climate change adaptation, disaster management, a special development centre for disabled children, blood donor recruitment, health promotion, social welfare, first aid, restoring family links, the family visits programme, youth development, volunteer development, fundraising activities and dissemination of international humanitarian law and humanitarian principles.

The National Society has piloted vulnerability and capacity assessment methods, and continues to lead participatory approaches in the Pacific with the health programme Tugeda lumi Waka for Helti Komuniti (Together we work for a healthy community). The Solomon Islands Red Cross was the first organization in the country to focus on the humanitarian aspects of climate change.

The Solomon Islands Red Cross is a legally constituted association, officially recognized by the government as a voluntary relief society, and auxiliary to the public authorities in accordance with the 1983 act. The National Society has a clear role in the national disaster management plan.

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Red Cross
Embassies and high commissions
French Red Cross
ICRC
International Federation
Japanese Red Cross Society
Leprosy Foundation (New Zealand)
National Disaster Management Office
New Zealand Red Cross
Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI)
Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre
Solomon Islands Chinese Association
Solomon Islands Government
Telekom
UK Department for International Development

facts and figures

1,000 members and volunteers ²⁰¹⁰
26 staff ²⁰¹⁰

Population: 530,669 ²⁰¹⁰
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita:
Int \$2,923 ²⁰⁰⁹
Human development index ranking: 123
²⁰¹⁰



Spotlight: Working together for a healthy community

Photo: Ben Lesbiana, a Solomon Islands Red Cross volunteer, helping the villagers of Ferafalu to put up mosquito nets in their homes in preparation for the Malaria season.

Source: Rob Few/ International Federation

Solomon Islands experienced a period of civil unrest from 1998 to 2003, which severely affected the economy, government infrastructure and the health of the population. 82 per cent of Solomon Islanders live in rural areas, where less than 1 in 10 have access to improved or non-shared sanitation facilities. The Solomon Islands has one of the highest rates of malaria outside of Africa.

To improve the health and hygiene practices of some of the country's most remote communities, the Solomon Islands Red Cross set up a community-based health project, supported by AusAID through the Australian Red Cross.

Tugeda Uime Waka for Helti Komuniti (Together We Work for Healthy Communities) aims to provide communities with the knowledge and skills to help them improve health and hygiene practices, as well as supply equipment, and the technical support to help them change their environment.

A Weather Coast community volunteer explained her experience of the programme's success: "The project has changed my life. Now I cover food, have made a pit for the toilet, don't share the same towels for swimming. I don't get diarrhoea or stomach aches anymore. We boiled my daughter's clothes and she doesn't get sores anymore."





Spotlight: Without discrimination

There are 29,631 reported cases of people living with HIV in the Pacific. Many Pacific island countries use a public health approach rather than a human rights approach to HIV. Public health laws include obligatory reporting, compulsory testing, isolation, confinement, limited privacy, and even criminal penalties for activities deemed “inappropriate”. Discrimination and exclusion encourage further spread of the epidemic and deprives society of the productive contribution of people living with HIV.

The Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation and the International Federation formed a partnership in 2008 that recognizes the International Federation’s commitment to HIV and the complementary role that National Societies can deliver through their network of volunteers in community-based health programmes.

A Pacific person living with HIV tells his story: “The committee decided to ban me from all activities. It saddened me that I could no longer take part in the activities I enjoyed, like church youth group. I contacted Samoa Red Cross. Their volunteers came to the village and gave training to the local people about HIV. The community and my friends accept me.”

Photo: National Societies play an important complementary role in combating HIV related stigma and discrimination through its network of volunteers in community-based health programmes.
Source: PIAF



The 2009 tsunami caused much destruction to property and livelihoods of the people on Manono island. Samoa Red Cross responded to the disaster by providing assistance in the areas of water, sanitation and hygiene promotion, livelihoods support, restoring family links, psychosocial support and participatory assessment. Source: Rob Few/ International Federation



Samoa Red Cross Society

Samoa Red Cross Society

The Samoa Red Cross Society serves the country's four inhabited islands through its headquarters in Apia. Initially a small National Society, the Samoa Red Cross Society has been transformed by its experience of the 2009 Pacific tsunami.

The majority of Samoa's population live on the two main islands of Savai'i and Upolu, which account for 99 per cent of the country's landmass. Samoa is affected by volcanism, occasional cyclones and tsunamis. In 1905 Mount Matavanu erupted for six years, causing damage to land and property .

On 29 September 2009, a magnitude 8.3 earthquake triggered a tsunami that killed 143 people – the most significant loss of life in recent times – and affected 5,000 people on Upolu island . The Samoa Red Cross Society's disaster management programme was quickly scaled up to support affected communities. The National Society's experience of disaster relief for tsunami victims has provided important lessons for the Movement in the Pacific region, in the areas of water, sanitation and hygiene promotion, livelihoods support, restoring family links, psychosocial support, participatory assessment and managing spontaneous volunteers. The experience has led to significant investment in Samoa's future through the strengthening and expansion of its National Society and disaster risk reduction activities.

The Samoa Red Cross Society implements a range of programmes including climate change adaptation, HIV prevention, commercial first aid, community-based health and first aid, blood donor recruitment, social welfare for the elderly, disaster management and risk reduction, the dissemination of international humanitarian law and humanitarian values as well as restoring family links. The Samoa Red Cross Society has relief supplies pre-positioned at the headquarters in Apia, and depots and containers in each four inhabited islands.

The Samoa Red Cross Society was established in 1952 as a branch of the New Zealand Red Cross, and was recognized by the Samoan Government in 1983.

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
 Australian Red Cross
 Cook Islands Red Cross Society
 Faith-based organizations
 French Red Cross
 ICRC
 International Federation
 Local non-government organizations
 Ministry of Health
 Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development
 New Zealand Red Cross
 Samoa Disaster Management Office
 Samoa HIV Alliance
 Samoa Water Authority
 The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

facts and figures

23 staff ²⁰¹⁰

Population: 179,000 ²⁰⁰⁸

Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita:
 Int \$5,731 ²⁰¹⁰



PNG Red Cross Society distributing relief items to flood victims in the Central province.
Source: PNG Red Cross Society



Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society

The work of the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNG Red Cross) is carried out by 30 staff and 1,000 members and volunteers across 13 branches. Programmes include disaster management, HIV and AIDS and tuberculosis awareness, community-based first aid, blood donor and recruitment, water, sanitation and hygiene, health in emergencies, human pandemic preparedness, gender and social inclusion, and the promotion of international humanitarian law and humanitarian values.

Papua New Guinea – a mountainous country that includes 151 islands – has a population of 6.6 million, and is one of the least developed nations in the Pacific. Eighty-seven per cent of the population lives in rural areas and over 800 languages are spoken. Access to healthcare is limited, and communities face the impact of a range of communicable diseases including malaria, tuberculosis and HIV and AIDS. The country is subject to frequent and sometimes severe earthquakes, mudslides and tsunamis. Regular volcanic eruptions occur. Papua New Guinea also has a history of civil unrest. Tribal warfare is endemic in the country's highlands. Meanwhile, the main cities witness high levels of intercommunal violence, aggravated by the proliferation of weapons, including attacks against members of minority communities.

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Red Cross
Government of Papua New Guinea
ICRC
International Federation
Japanese Red Cross Society
National AIDS Council
New Zealand Aid Programme (NZAID)
New Zealand Red Cross
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

facts and figures

1000 members and volunteers ²⁰⁰⁹
30 staff ²⁰⁰⁹

Population: 6.6 million ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita:
Int \$2,302 ²⁰¹⁰
Human development index ranking: 137
²⁰¹⁰

The PNG Red Cross demonstrated its disaster management capacity when responding to Cyclone Guba in 2007, severe sea swells in 2008, the 2009 influenza dysentery and cholera triple epidemic and the 2010 cholera outbreak. The National Society reached 45,000 people during the triple epidemic with a door-to-door campaign, information booths and a media campaign. The PNG Red Cross has positioned relief supplies in ten containers throughout the country. The PNG Red Cross uses community first aid in conflict and relief assistance programmes as an entry point to working in situations of violence and tribal warfare in four provinces. When responding to violence and conflict, PNG Red Cross faces a significant challenge in positioning itself as a neutral and purely humanitarian actor.

The National Society has pioneered the 'community competency process', an integrated approach to health and HIV. Drawing on traditional practices of collectively identifying and responding to needs, this approach harnesses cultural integrity and addresses the drivers of HIV and AIDS.

The PNG Red Cross was incorporated by an act of parliament in 1976.



Spotlight: Making a difference in situations of violence

Photo: Papua New Guinea Red Cross
volunteers distributing relief and hygiene
items to support the most vulnerable
communities.
Source: Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society

In 2010, the Bulolo conflict began when tensions escalated between two communities in Morobe Province. Houses were burned and food gardens destroyed, resulting in the displacement of over 2,500 people.

The PNG Red Cross Society and the ICRC conducted a joint assessment. They shared the findings widely, to ensure the acceptance of the Red Cross by all parties. A list of recommendations for urgent action was presented to the Papua New Guinea Chief Secretary, and the government responded accordingly.

Addressing the most pressing needs, the PNG Red Cross Society immediately mobilized 17 volunteers and refreshed them in the skills of first aid in conflict situations. The National Society provided 600 tarpaulins and 1,000 mosquito nets to the displaced people.

In 2011, two ICRC delegates (economic security, water and habitat) visited the site to assess the primary health and hygiene factors in the camp, and advise PNG Red Cross on community-based techniques for involving the displaced people in promoting a safe and healthy environment. The PNG Red Cross Society distributed hygiene items, clothes, water containers and cooking pots. They assisted the Bulolo health centre with hygiene items, cleaning agents, antibiotics and purification tablets.



Palau Red Cross Society

Founded in 1995 and recognized by the ICRC in 1997, the Palau Red Cross Society has 659 volunteers and serves all 16 states of the Republic of Palau. The Palau Red Cross Society has ongoing programmes in HIV prevention, assistance to victims of fire, restoring family links, first aid, human pandemic preparedness, blood donor recruitment, promotion of international humanitarian law, and youth engagement.

Palau is an independent constitutional democracy in free association with the United States of America. Palau achieved independence in 1994. Its population of 20,000 people lives on nine islands. The furthestmost islands, the southern group, are 600 kilometres from the main islands. Palau borders the typhoon belt and is periodically affected by tropical storms that disrupt air services, water and power supplies.

An active member of the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO), the Palau Red Cross Society has a formal role in building community capacity in disaster preparedness and responding to emergencies with emergency shelter, damage assessment and mass feeding. The National Society worked with NEMO and the Palau National Youth Congress to distribute water containers to vulnerable communities in preparation for the 2002 El Niño* weather phenomenon. The National Society assisted the health ministry during the 2000 dengue fever outbreak, distributing literature to all the residents of severely affected areas, and broadcasting information via local television and radio stations. Palau Red Cross Society takes part in the H1N1, bird flu and pandemic taskforce.

The Palau Red Cross Society's 56 first-aid instructors have trained 3,000 people in community first aid – one in seven Palau citizens. Nine responder teams have been trained to provide first-aid assistance during emergencies.

In 1995, the then President of Palau, Kuniwo Nakamura, chartered the Palau Red Cross Society. In 1997, the Palau National Congress passed House Joint Resolution 5-24-3, officially recognizing the National Society and adopting the Geneva Conventions. The Palau Red Cross Society is the only humanitarian organization that sits on the National Emergency Committee.

key partnerships

American Red Cross
Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Red Cross
Government of Palau
Japanese Red Cross Society
Koror State Public Land Authority
Local businesses
Local media
Ministry of Health
National Emergency Committee
New Zealand Red Cross
Palau Hospital
Palau National Youth Congress
Spanish Red Cross

facts and figures

659 members and volunteers ²⁰¹⁰
5 staff ²⁰¹⁰

Population: 25,000 ²⁰⁰⁹
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita:
USD \$8,100 ²⁰⁰⁸



Jonathan Temol, a Palau Red Cross Society volunteer, provide training to staff and volunteers on the use of VHF units.
Source: Palau Red Cross Society



New Zealand Red Cross

The New Zealand Red Cross carries out its work via a national network of branches and services centres utilising the commitment of thousands of volunteers, members and staff. Across the Pacific New Zealand Red Cross provides development assistance to National Societies and their communities in the form of core funding, first aid training, disaster preparedness and IT and Telecom technical assistance.

New Zealand is a diverse and multicultural society as well as being one of the most vulnerable countries in the Pacific. Earthquakes are common as are the risks posed by volcanos, adverse weather events and tsunamis. As a result the National Society has strong disaster management programming incorporating response teams, relief and recovery capability.

New Zealand Red Cross volunteers are involved in a number of community service activities, including meals on wheels for the elderly, care for the housebound, medical patient transport and community education in the form of first aid training and drug and alcohol education, and advocacy. The New Zealand Red Cross actively supports newly arrived refugees through settlement support, restoring family links and family reunion programmes. International humanitarian law and the fundamental principles are disseminated to the armed forces, schools and general public.

Globally, humanitarian and development activities including New Zealand aidworker deployments are undertaken in Asia, Africa and the Middle East during conflict and disasters.

Formerly a sub-branch of the British Red Cross, the New Zealand Red Cross was established as a National Society in its own right in 1931. The New Zealand government adopted the Geneva Conventions Act in 1958, providing legal protection for the Red Cross emblem. The New Zealand Red Cross under its special auxiliary status provides support roles in emergency management, health and international assistance to the public authorities and Government ministries.

key partnerships

ICRC
International Federation
Partner National Societies
Local business and corporate
Local Government authorities
Ministry of Civil Defence Emergency Management
Ministry Foreign Affairs and Trade
Ministry of Social Development
Ministry of Health
National and International NGOs
NZ Defence
National IHL Committee

facts and figures

Over 20,000 members and volunteers
100 branches and 16 service centres
160 staff ²⁰¹⁰

Population: 4.4 million ²⁰¹⁰

Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: Int \$27,420 ²⁰¹⁰

Human development index ranking: 3 ²⁰¹⁰



A New Zealand Red Cross volunteer registering and caring for displaced people in a welfare centre after a disaster.
Source: New Zealand Red Cross



Spotlight: The power of humanity

National Societies mobilize volunteers to address disadvantage. Through the hospital and community transport programme, volunteers of the New Zealand Red Cross provide safe, easily accessed transport services to the sick, elderly and housebound who cannot afford or access transport, to enable them to make the vital medical appointments they need and so improve their quality of life.

Dora Riepan, 84, found travelling to medical appointments a burden. "They come right to my door to pick me up, wait at the hospital til I am done and then take me home again all for free". In 2010, New Zealand Red Cross volunteers transported over 10,000 people to medical appointments.

Photo: Volunteers of New Zealand Red Cross provide care and support services to the sick, elderly and housebound.
Source: New Zealand Red Cross



Micronesia Red Cross Society

Founded in 1998 and recognized by the ICRC in 2003, the Micronesia Red Cross is the newest National Society in the Pacific. The National Society is consolidating its role as an important humanitarian actor in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). The National Society maintains a communication network of 7 satellite phones and 12 VHF radios to assist with early warning, coordination and emergency response across the islands. The Micronesia Red Cross has established disaster relief stocks in five containers across the country. With strong support from FSM Congress, the National Society runs programmes in disaster management, first aid, blood donor recruitment, youth development, restoring family links, HIV/AIDS prevention and the promotion of humanitarian values.

FSM is a federation of four state governments – Chuuk, Pohnpei, Yap and Kosrae – in free association with the United States of America. FSM's population of 107,000 people live on 67 islands, which stretch 2,700 kilometres from east to west. This wide dispersion of communities across a great expanse of water is a longstanding obstacle to trade and mobility. FSM has one of the highest rates of net emigration in the world, with 21 people per 1,000 leaving the country each year. The islands of FSM are vulnerable to typhoons, mudslides, drought and the impact of climate change.

The Micronesia Red Cross has established community and workplace first aid volunteers in each of the four FSM states. The National Society has an active blood donation registry supporting the hospital in Pohnpei.

Significant numbers of FSM citizens are enlisted in the United States armed forces. By verifying data about the illness and death of family members, the Micronesia Red Cross enables these US service personnel to return home to be with their families during their time of need. The Micronesia Red Cross provides a unique service for fisherman rescued in FSM waters following the loss of their boats at sea, supporting them through their physical recovery and return home.

In June 2000, the Federated States of Micronesia National Congress adopted a resolution that protects the emblem and recognizes the Micronesia Red Cross as the only Red Cross society in the country.

key partnerships

American Red Cross
Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Red Cross
Government of the Federated States of Micronesia
ICRC
Japanese Red Cross Society
Local hospitals
New Zealand Red Cross

facts and figures

1,090 members and volunteers ²⁰¹⁰
6 staff ²⁰¹⁰

Population: 110,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita:
Int \$3,088 ²⁰⁰⁹
Human development index ranking: 103
²⁰¹⁰



Staff and volunteers of Micronesia Red Cross Society making an inventory of the relief items it has prepositioned for emergency response.
Source: Micronesia Red Cross Society



Red Cross first aid volunteers in action during a school's sporting event at Tarawa.
Source: Nicolas Alexandre Bonvin/ ICRC



Kiribati Red Cross Society

Kiribati Red Cross Society

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Red Cross
Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan)
Government of Kiribati
International Federation
New Zealand Red Cross
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

facts and figures

200 members and volunteers ²⁰⁰⁹
5 staff ²⁰⁰⁹

Population: 97,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: Int \$6,182 ²⁰⁰⁹

Based on the capital island of Tarawa, the Kiribati Red Cross Society has 100 registered members, 30 adult volunteers and 70 youth volunteers. First-aid training is an important part of the National Society's activities. The Kiribati Red Cross Society staff and volunteers deliver first-aid modules to school students, police and fisheries workers on the capital island and outer islands. HIV and AIDS awareness is incorporated into all first-aid courses. The Kiribati Red Cross Society's youth programme involves young people in community activities in Tarawa and the outer islands. Youth volunteers deliver first-aid services at special events and sports competitions. Other programmes include disaster management, blood donor recruitment and restoring family links.

Kiribati consists of 33 low-lying coral atolls and one raised limestone island situated across an ocean territory of 1 million square kilometres. Kiribati is considered one of the least developed nations in the Pacific and among the most vulnerable in the world to climate change. It is also susceptible to drought, storm surges, coastal erosion and occasional tropical cyclones. Pollution in Tarawa threatens the clean water supply of one third of Kiribati's residents.

An evaluation of the Kiribati Red Cross Society's activities was carried out in 2010. Areas for development include the extension of activities to outer islands, delivering disaster preparedness training for volunteers, increasing the number of youth members and developing a stronger revenue base.

The Kiribati Red Cross Society was established in 1965 as a branch of the British Red Cross, until the country achieved political independence in 1979. The Kiribati Red Cross Act was passed in 1989 recognizing the society as a corporate body and protecting the name and emblem. The National Society became a member of the Movement in 1997 after its recognition by the ICRC. The Kiribati Red Cross Society is a member of the National Disaster Council.



French Red Cross

croix-rouge française

key partnerships in the Pacific Region

European Commission (ECHO, Europaid)
French Government
Government of New Caledonia
High Commission of the Republic of France
ICRC
International Federation
Pacific Island National Societies
Veolia Foundation
Institute of Research for Development (IRD)
Météo France

facts and figures

52,000 members and volunteers ²⁰¹⁰
17,000 staff ²⁰¹⁰

New Caledonia
population: 246,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: \$15,000 ²⁰⁰³

French Polynesia
population: 266,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: \$18,000 ²⁰⁰⁴

Wallis and Futuna
population: 15,343 ²⁰¹⁰
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: \$3,800 ²⁰⁰⁴

Established in 1907, the French Red Cross is one of the oldest National Societies in the Movement. It consists of 908 branches across France and in the country's overseas territories. In the Pacific, the French Red Cross has branches in New Caledonia, French Polynesia, and Wallis and Futuna. Each branch has a pool of active volunteers. The French Red Cross has established the South Pacific Regional Intervention Platform (PIROPS - Plateforme d'Intervention Régionale Océan Pacifique Sud) based in New Caledonia. PIROPS is a technical and logistical resource for Red Cross Red Crescent disaster management in the Pacific.

New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna are overseas territories (collectivités d'outre-mer) of the Republic of France. Tropical cyclones and tsunamis are a significant threat to each of the islands. New Caledonia contains 25 per cent of the world's known nickel resources. Almost half of the territory's population is ethnic Melanesians, and one third is European. French Polynesia is made up of 130 islands – of which the best known is Tahiti – in six groups scattered across 2.5 million square kilometres of ocean. Wallis and Futuna is a small territory of 15,000 people living on two island groups that are some 260 kilometres apart. Primarily a subsistence economy, 80 per cent of Wallis and Futuna's workforce derives its income from agriculture.

French Red Cross programmes fall into five broad areas: first aid, social inclusion and social services, health promotion, training and international activities. It carries out each of these activities among its branches and PIROPS operations in the Pacific. Activities in the territories are diverse, including a social welfare unit for mothers and a special care unit for Alzheimer sufferers in New Caledonia, nutritional awareness for schoolchildren in French Polynesia, and food distribution for disaster victims in Wallis and Futuna.

PIROPS provides training in logistics and relief for Pacific island National Societies, and has deployed staff to assist emergency assessments and disaster response. With eight delegates based in four countries, French Red Cross is cooperating on disaster management programmes with National Societies in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Tonga and Samoa



French Red Cross staff and volunteers assisting a beneficiary in Ono Futuna.
Source: French Red Cross



The Fiji Red Cross Society uses participatory training methods to prepare volunteers for disaster.
Source: Jess Letch/ Australian Red Cross



Fiji Red Cross Society

The Fiji Red Cross Society is the most widely recognized and respected humanitarian organization in the country. With headquarters in Suva, two divisional service centres and 15 branches, the National Society covers 80 per cent of the country. The Fiji Red Cross Society programmes focus on health and care, disaster management, community safety, youth and international humanitarian law. The National Society has a core group of 440 active volunteers, with 3,000 on standby to assist during disasters.

Fiji's territory includes 322 islands, approximately one-third of which are inhabited. It is a highly developed Pacific island economy, generating income through tourism, sugar and exports of natural resources. Fiji is a multi-ethnic, multi-faith society, influenced by Pacific, Indian, European and Asian traditions. Due to unrest in 1987, 2000 and 2006, the political situation in Fiji remains turbulent. Fiji faces the challenges of unplanned urban settlement, limited health care and health awareness in remote areas, declining access to clean water and rising poverty.

The Fiji Red Cross Society has a well-established disaster management programme, with a defined national role to provide temporary shelter, clothing, water and water containers to people affected by emergencies. The Fiji Red Cross Society has developed a system of 'black packs' that contain relief items for a family: clothing, soap, towels, blankets, mosquito repellent and a basic first-aid kit. Black packs are durable, and can be airdropped if necessary. The National Society's community-based disaster risk reduction activities utilize participatory approaches to increase resilience and preparedness for disasters.

The Fiji Red Cross Society trains the community in a range of first-aid skills, including Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, first aid at sea, water safety, and courses for carers of children. The Fiji Red Cross Society derives a significant proportion of its funding from fee-earning training courses and the sale of first-aid kits and ambulatory aids. The National Society runs health promotion programmes that educate the community about HIV and AIDS, sexual health, tuberculosis and the prevention of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Established in 1954 as a branch of the British Red Cross, the Fiji Red Cross Society became an independent National Society in 1973, officially recognized by the government as a voluntary relief organization, an auxiliary to the public authorities and as the only Red Cross society in Fiji.

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Red Cross
Government of Fiji
ICRC
International Federation
National Disaster Management Council
New Zealand Red Cross

facts and figures

440 members and volunteers ²⁰⁰⁸
22 staff and 5 funded volunteers ²⁰¹⁰

Population: 844,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: Int \$4,450 ²⁰¹⁰
Human development index ranking: 86 ²⁰¹⁰



Spotlight: Learning together

Building partnerships and sharing lessons learned are an essential part of every successful disaster management programme. When Tropical Cyclone Pat struck the island of Aitutaki in the Cook Islands in February 2010, it damaged 580 households and affected 1,671 people. The Cook Island Red Cross Society immediately deployed staff for an initial damage assessment, along with Emergency Management Cook Islands and other government agencies. Following this, the National Society worked with the Ministry of Health and local councillors to distribute relief supplies, provide psychosocial support, and conduct an intensive water, sanitation and dengue fever awareness campaign.

After the emergency phase, the Cook Islands Red Cross Society facilitated a day-long workshop that involved all stakeholders in the national response. The workshop addressed questions that arose during the operation, including coordination challenges, roles of different stakeholders and the use of assessment documentation. Charlie Numanga, Disaster Management Officer for the Cook Islands Red Cross Society summarised the spirit of collaboration, "We want to discuss how to move forward. We don't want to duplicate, but to work together."

After the devastating Tropical Cyclone Pat hit Aitutaki, the Cook Islands Red Cross Society ran a breakfast programme for school children in some of the worst affected areas on the island.

Source: Cook Islands Red Cross Society



Junior Red Cross volunteers visiting the elderly on Mangaia Island.
Source: International Federation



Cook Islands Red Cross Society

Joining the Movement in 2002, the Cook Islands Red Cross is one of the newest National Societies in the region. The National Society has achieved 100 per cent coverage of its country, establishing a branch network that covers each of the 11 inhabited outer islands scattered across 2.2 million square kilometres of ocean. Frequently affected by natural disasters, the National Society focuses on building community resilience through participatory approaches to programming. The Cook Islands Red Cross Society has reduced vulnerability to disasters by equipping each of its branches with early warning satellite phones, distributing cyclone tracking maps and emergency phone numbers, training communities in basic first-aid skills and reducing cyclone damage through tree trimming.

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Red Cross
Community representatives
Empress Shōken Fund
Global Alliance for Disaster Risk Reduction
Government of the Cook Islands
ICRC
International Federation
Japanese Red Cross Society
Local organizations: youth, women, HIV and AIDS
Local schools
Emergency Management Cook Islands
New Zealand Aid Programme
New Zealand Red Cross
Spanish Red Cross
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

facts and figures

300 members and volunteers ²⁰¹⁰
10 staff ²⁰¹⁰

Population: 13,000 ²⁰⁰⁹

The Cook Islands is an internally self-governing nation in free association with New Zealand. All Cook Islanders are also New Zealand citizens. Population decline is a serious concern, especially in the outer islands. It is estimated that 60,000 Cook Islanders live abroad, and only 13,000 remain at home. The Cook Islands has one of the best-performing economies in the Pacific, but its dependence on marine resources and tourism makes it vulnerable to external shocks. Tropical cyclones and water shortages are significant threats to Cook Islands communities, with climate change and El Niño* influencing the frequency and severity of threats in recent years.

Cook Islands Red Cross Society programmes include disaster management, water and sanitation, commercial and community first aid, blood donor recruitment, social welfare for the elderly and victims of house fires, restoring family links, youth peer education, psychosocial support, and the dissemination of international humanitarian law and humanitarian values. The youth programme is a great asset to the National Society, with young people very active in peer education, condom distribution and disaster response. The Cook Islands Red Cross Society incorporates HIV, disaster preparedness, psychological support and climate change messages into its first-aid training.

The Cook Islands Red Cross Society was founded in 1989. In 2002 the country's national parliament adopted the Geneva Conventions Act and the Cook Islands Red Cross Society Act, and both of which were assented to by the Queen's representative.

Australian Red Cross

key partnerships

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
Australian Defence Force
Beyond Blue
Department of Immigration and Citizenship
ICRC
International Federation
Local businesses
Non-government organizations in Australia and abroad
Other National Societies

facts and figures

65,452 members and volunteers ²⁰⁰⁹
2,192 staff, plus 3,370 in the blood service ²⁰⁰⁹

Population: 22.5 million ²⁰¹⁰
Gross domestic product (PPP) per capita: Int \$39,692 ²⁰¹⁰
Human development index ranking: 2 ²⁰¹⁰

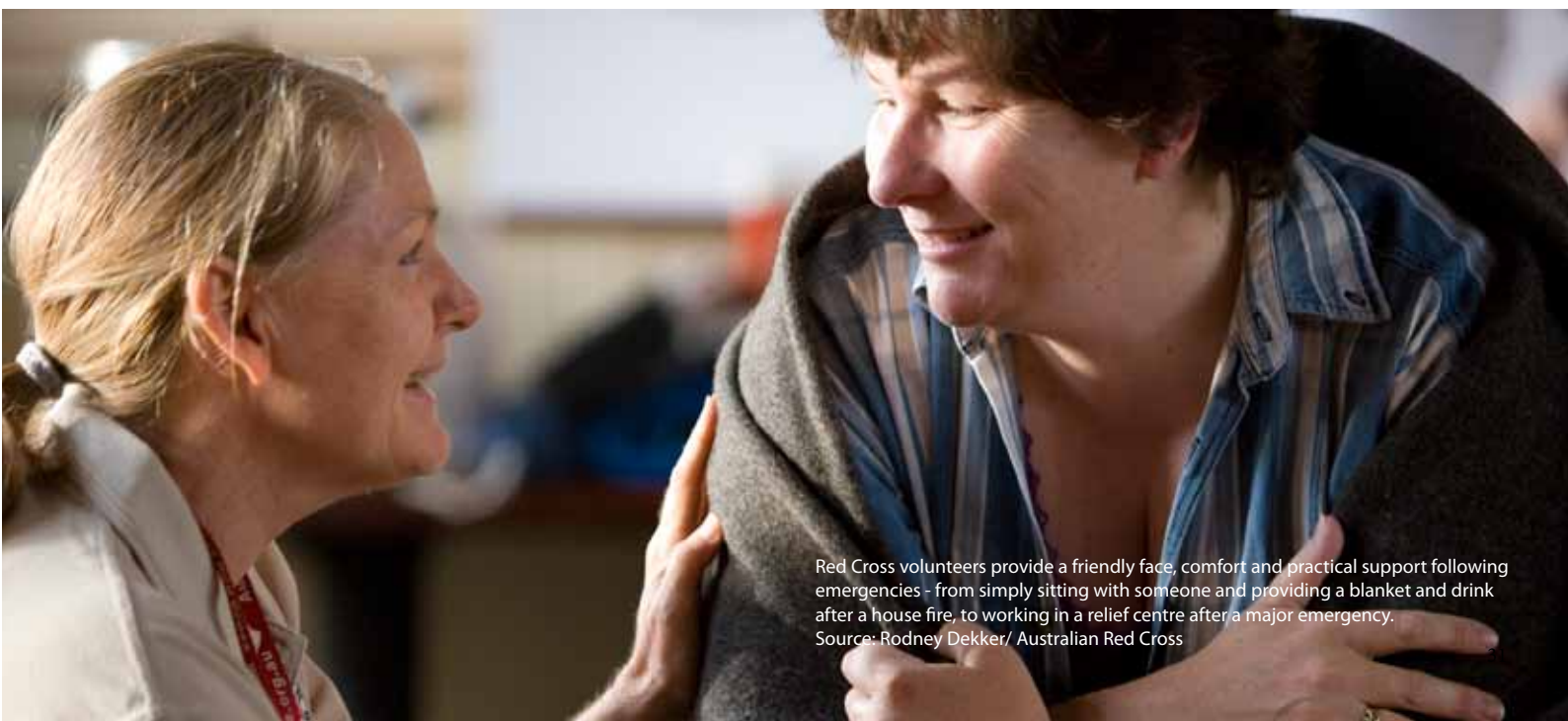
The Australian Red Cross is the oldest and largest National Society based in the Pacific region, with 2,192 staff, over 65,000 members and volunteers and a budget of almost 1 billion Swiss francs. The Australian Red Cross is a leading humanitarian organization in Australia, and works to strengthen Movement activities in the Pacific region and beyond. Each year, the Australian Red Cross has more than 100 delegates helping the most vulnerable in over 30 countries around the world. Its Pacific Disaster Management Partnership has helped each Pacific National Society employ a disaster management officer, and supports the disaster management programme of the International Federation.

Being a vast continent, Australia regularly experiences flooding, drought, bushfires, earthquakes, landslides and severe storms – including cyclones, dust storms and hailstorms. Australia is a prosperous and developed country, with a life expectancy of 81.3 years. The leading causes of death are non-communicable diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular disease. Indigenous communities rank as the most disadvantaged Australians on a number of socio-economic and health indicators. The life expectancy at birth of an indigenous male is 67 years, and 73 for females.

Each Australian Red Cross programme is aligned with one of seven priority areas: strengthening disaster and emergency services, increasing international aid and development, championing international humanitarian law, addressing the impact of migration, tackling entrenched locational disadvantage, addressing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage, and overcoming social exclusion by building bridges back into communities for marginalized people.

In the Pacific region, the Australian Red Cross supports the International Federation and 11 Pacific National Societies in a range of activities, including disaster management, climate change adaptation, HIV and AIDS awareness, organizational development, blood donor recruitment, disaster recovery, community-based health, restoring family links and water, sanitation and hygiene.

The Australian Red Cross was founded in 1914 as a branch of the British Red Cross and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1941. The charter and rules have been amended several times, with the most recent amendments made in 2009.



Red Cross volunteers provide a friendly face, comfort and practical support following emergencies - from simply sitting with someone and providing a blanket and drink after a house fire, to working in a relief centre after a major emergency.
Source: Rodney Dekker/ Australian Red Cross



American Red Cross

American Red Cross

key partnerships

International Federation
Local businesses
Local government agencies

facts and figures

5,450 volunteers ²⁰¹⁰
113 staff ²⁰¹⁰

United States (including Hawaii) –
population: 313,000,000 ²⁰¹¹
Gross domestic product (PPP) per
capita in 2010: \$47,400

Guam
population: 176,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per
capita: \$15,000 ²⁰⁰⁵

American Samoa
population: 66,000 ²⁰⁰⁵
Gross domestic product (PPP) per
capita: \$8,000 ²⁰⁰⁷

Northern Mariana Islands
population: 85,000 ²⁰⁰⁸
Gross domestic product (PPP) per
capita in 2000: \$12,500 ²⁰⁰⁰

More than 100 employees and 5,400 volunteers support the domestic programs and services of The American Red Cross in the Pacific region. There are four American Red Cross offices in the Pacific, based in Hawaii (Oahu, Kauai, Hawaii and Maui), Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands (Saipan and Tinian). Founded in 1881, the American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to disaster survivors, supplies nearly half of the nation's blood, teaches lifesaving skills, provides international humanitarian aid and supports military members and their families. Nationwide, the American Red Cross comprises 33,800 employees, 529,000 volunteers and 640 branches.

The volcanic Hawaiian island chain consists of hundreds of islands spread over 2,400 kilometres. Tourism is a major source of revenue, with over 7 million visitors per year. American Samoa consists of five volcanic islands and two coral atolls. The government employs approximately one-third of American Samoa's workforce. The Northern Mariana Islands has an indigenous population of Chamorros and Carolinians, living on 14 islands that are subject to typhoons and volcanic activity. Guam, forms part of the Mariana Islands archipelago, and hosts one of the most strategically important US military bases in the Pacific including 17,000 defence personnel and their dependents.

In the year from July 1 2009 to June 30 2011, American Red Cross branches in the region responded to more than 100 emergencies, including an earthquake and tsunami that affected more than 2,000 families in American Samoa. At the peak of the response, nearly 300 American Red Cross volunteers from throughout the US were involved in supporting 22 shelters, distributing relief and hygiene items, and providing emotional comfort to individuals and families on the island. During this same time period, the four offices collectively trained more than 36,000 people in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and other safety skills; briefed 18,000 members of the armed forces and their families; and prepared 10,000 people for future emergencies through educational presentations.

Through its headquarters in Washington DC, the American Red Cross provides development assistance to National Societies in the Pacific region. It has prioritized capacity building in disaster management, funding technology improvements, the regional disaster response team initiative and placing staff with the International Federation in Suva and Kuala Lumpur. The American Red Cross has also helps to train National Societies in the region.



Red Cross volunteers provided assistance to the affected people of American Samoa following the devastating tsunami in September 2009.
Source: Talia Frenkel/ American Red Cross

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